

State Standing Committee Minutes

September 12th, 2005

Attendees: Frank Reed, Nick Nichols, Jim Walsh (member), Paul Blake, Kitty Gallagher (member), Scott Thompson, Sue Powers (member), Marty Roberts (member), Clare Munat (member), John Howland, Michael Saborin, Nick Emlen, Gladys Mooney (member), Lyn Parker-Haas (member), Terry Rowe, Anne Donahue

Last Month's Minutes:

- Correction—Spelling of one of the potential candidates for the VSH Governing Committee – first name should be “Chandar”
- Minutes approved as corrected

Nominating Committee:

- Volunteers are needed for this committee—Jim and Gladys volunteered to join Clare on the committee
- There was discussion about the administrative rules regarding allowable number of members on committee. The administrative rules state there should be 9-15 members, but several people have heard that the governor wants to keep the committee at 9. It was requested that Frank check with the administration to see if the committee could add additional members beyond the 9 if it wanted to.
- Because of the schedule of when their terms of service on the committee will end, it looks like all three of the consumer representatives on the committee will be stepping down at the same time. Is there a way the terms can be staggered so all three consumers don't step down at the same time? Frank will check on this.

Paul Blake:

- Melinda Murtaugh's husband passed away unexpectedly earlier this month. She is on leave and may be on leave for an extended period of time.
- Beth Tanzman has moved out of her role as Adult Services Director and accepted reassignment as the Director of the VSH Futures Project. Beth will be dedicated full-time to the VSH Futures Project moving forward. The vacant Division Director position has been reconfigured to accomplish this role shift. Additionally, there is a recognized need for several new positions to assist her in the management of this project. New positions needed include a communications staff position, a program research/policy analyst position, an administrative assistant, a part time lawyer, and eventually, someone to assist with coordinating any building of new facilities. Frank Reed has accepted the Adult Services Director position and will serve as Acting Director during the recruitment process.
- John Pierce will be retiring from State Government later this fall. There have been initial discussions about possibly changing the focus of his position, which has been an Assistant Director in the Division.

Terry Rowe/VSH:

- VSH plans to request an amendment to the Fletcher Allen Health Care contract to provide Quality Management Oversight at VSH. Recruiting a Quality and Risk Management Chief for VSH has been problematic for a long time.
- The Department of Justice will be visiting on September 27th, 28th and 29th to discuss their recommendations as outlined in their report. Some of their recommendations will be non-negotiable and some will be negotiable. Some of their recommendations compare to standards of CMS and JCAHO, while other recommendations represent higher standards than those of CMH and JCAHO. VSH's understanding is that the meeting is part of a legal negotiation and thus confidential, and would not be audiotaped nor would minutes made available to the public.
- Members of the committee requested that the following issue be placed on the agenda of the next meeting for discussion: Improving collaborative planning at VSH between the psychiatrists and the social workers and the community mental health centers re: discharge planning
- The census at VSH remains high. Part of the increased census is due to patients not being discharged because of a lack of housing in the community. Unit renovations for quiet rooms cannot occur until community capacity is increased. Plans to convert two rooms into quiet rooms on B1 will not occur. The B2 storage area will be converted as planned.
- Issues raised at the last focus group included: problems with the shower temperature in Brooks, interest in more activity groups and crafts, a request for access to a swimming pool, locating activity staff at VSH, staff seem to be overworked and have too much paperwork, patients feeling that are getting too many shots, complaints of people slamming doors and the need for a "Shhhhhh" sign, a request for a pool table (this has been deemed to be too dangerous, and a ping pong table is going to be put in), being yelled at by staff, good food, appreciation for outdoor time. Terry Rowe will address these issues and provide an update to the committee members.

Jeff Rothenberg

Jeff Rothenberg presented on behalf of the CRT directors re: the Designation Process and the Clara Martin Center's (CMC) experience with piloting the Family Psycho Education Model. Re: the Designation process, comments/concerns from the CRT directors include:

- Need for more clarity re: how changes in the Minimum Standards are made and how DAs are notified
- Concern that the use of a numerical rating may lead to a lack of clarity re: what improvements need to be made and increased expectations.

Frank responded that the use of a numerical rating system will help increase inter-rater reliability of the clinical record reviews, reducing variability between different staff who complete record reviews and providing more equitable comparison of agency CRT documentation. Developing such a system has been in response to these identified needs

by the CRT Directors over some time. The new system has been piloted at 3 agencies thus far, and no plans of correction have been required at these agencies related to their scoring outcomes. Each agency has been asked for feedback on the usefulness of outcomes report. DMH has been working on a guidebook for raters using the numerical system and will share this draft work with the CRT Directors for input.

Jeff's report on the CMC's experience the Family Psycho Education Model included the following points:

- The model focuses developing and running a multi-family problem-solving group that includes consumers and their family members
- CMC found that the engagement process is very important to developing the group
- Currently the Bradford site has two groups meeting 2 times a month and the Randolph site has a new group that started recently.
- The time required for staff to do group supervision and extensive outreach to engage families has been the most expensive element of providing the treatment

Members of the Standing Committee expressed an interest in assessing the start-up costs associated with this practice. Nick commented that the State Clinical Practices Advisory Panel (CPAP) will likely examine this issue as it looks to make recommendations to the state re: this practice. DMH will send out the most recent set of recommendations from the CPAP re: another practice, Illness Management and Recovery (IMR).

Jeff also mentioned that the CRT programs are getting more referrals from Correctional facilities, involving individuals with dual disorders. For those referrals, it has been difficult for the programs to assess and meet the needs of the individuals—they often leave the correctional facility with no medication, no housing, and no supports. The standing committee requested that this be put on the agenda for a future meeting.

Membership Committee

The committee talked about the results of the reference checks for Chandar Hall and recommended that she apply to serve on the VSH governing body.

Re-Designation Process

The Agency of Human Services has decided to go forward with re-instituting the Re-Designation Process. There will be a meeting at the Vermont Council of Developmental and Mental Health Services re: concerns of the council. Re: one suggestion that DMH sign off on the results of the designation visit at the end of the visit, Frank feels that this is not a practical idea, as there is other information that is also obtained outside of the Program Review site visit related to Designation. Such a sign-off would be a “point in time” measure for one aspect of the Designation process that may be misleading. Frank did agree that such a sign-off is reasonable and makes sense for an audit. He and Ron Clark have developed a sign-off sheet for the Medicaid Fee-For-Service Audits. There was also a re-commitment for members of the State Standing Committee to participate in the Re-Designation process. The Program Review for LCMH has already occurred, so members will be asked to identify their availability for Program Reviews moving forward.

Department Update

The move to Burlington has been completed. Some members of the committee do not have the new phone numbers and address of the new office, though the toll-free number is the same. DMH will send out a phone and address list to the members of the Standing Committee

Public Comment

Fletcher Allen Health Care is heading up a 120-day plan to develop a strategic plan to address the existing problems at VSH. Dr. Pieratini is in the process of creating a “problem list,” which will include the perceived problems at VSH. Marty will act as a point person for the standing committee for anyone who wants to have input into the development of the problem list. Please forward your input to Marty.

There was a request for DMH to forward the new DMH phone numbers and mailing address to all of its mailing lists.

Appreciation was expressed by numerous members for Anne Donahue’s time as a member. She explained that she was not reappointed as a member of this committee, because it is the policy of the current administration not to have state employees or legislators serve on committees.

Request from Standing Committee

- Add Scott Thompson to mailing list for standing committee members. Address is PO Box 43, Lake Elmore, VT 05657
- Verify if the Governor wants the standing committee composition limited to 9 members
- Verify the rationale for why all three consumer members terms of office end at the same time versus staggering with the provider and family appointments
- Bring a hard copy of the Administrative Rules to the October meeting
- Send out the new DMH phone numbers and address to standing committee members
- Re-circulate upcoming standing committee meeting dates
- Send out copies of Futures Meeting Schedule to standing committee members
- Send copies of Clinical Practices Advisory Panel’s recommendations re: Illness Management and Recovery to committee members. Add committee members’ names to distribution list for minutes from the panel’s meetings.

Tentative Agenda for October 3rd, 2005 meeting

- Invite JoEllen Swain and Tom Simpatico to discuss discharge and transition planning between VSH, Social Workers and designated agencies
- Presentation on new COSIG grant planning efforts with ADAP
- Frank: report on committee number and consumer terms of office
- Nick Emlen: report of summary of discussion re: Re-Designation Process

- Update from Terry on VSH (including focus groups)
- Update from Paul on DMH (including Dept of Justice Visit)
- Discussion: Is there a need for standing committee members to replace Anne as Chair of VSH Action Subcommittee and Liaison to VSH Futures Committee, and the role of Policy Subcommittee
- Beth Tanzman: report on VSH Futures Project

Possible Items for November Agenda:

- Transition issues for individuals leaving prison/jail.
- Anne Donahue recommended that the committee look at the VSH Futures Plan, which has a section on addressing Corrections issues. While the plan has been supported by the Governor, the position resources are not in the budget.

Other notes:

- Marty Roberts recently returned from Australia where she presented at an international conference on recovery education with Jane Winterling. Marty said the presentation went very well, and she also got to go to some great workshops, including a presentation by Ron Coleman from Scotland on working with people who hear voices and helping them live with the voices instead of suppressing them.